

FRECKLES

By
Gene Stratton-
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CHAPTER III.

A FEATHER FALLS.

THE sounds that had at first struck cold fear into Freckles' soul now knew him left on wing and silent foot at the approach of winter. As flock after flock of the birds returned and he recognized the old echoes reawakening he found to his surprise that he had been lonely for them and was hailing their return with great joy. He was possessed of an overpowering desire to know what they were, to learn where they had been and whether they would make friends with him as the winter birds had done, and if they did would they be as fierce? For with the running snap, creeping worm and winging bug most of Freckles' "chickens" had deserted him, entered the swamp and feasted to such a state of plethora on its store that they cared little for his supply, so that in the days of mating and nest building the boy was deserted.

The yearly resurrection of the Limberlost is a mighty revival. Freckles stood back and watched with awe and envy the gradual receding and re-populating of the swamp. Keen eyed and alert through danger and loneliness, he noted every stage of development from the first piping frog and unsheathing bud to full leafage and the return of the last emigrant.

The knowledge of his complete loneliness and utter insignificance was hourly thrust upon him. He brooded and fretted until he was in a fever, and yet he never guessed the cause. He was filled with a vast impatience and a longing that would not much further be denied.

It was June by the zodiac, June by the Limberlost, and by every delight of a newly resurrected season it should have been June in the hearts of all men. Yet Freckles scowled darkly as he came down the trail, and the running tap, tap which tested the sagging wire and telegraphed word of his coming to his furred and feathered friends of the swamp this morning carried the story of his discontent a mile ahead of him.

Freckles' special pet, a dainty yellow coated, black sleeved cock goldfinch, had for several days past remained on the wire, the bravest of all, and Freckles, absorbed with the cunning and beauty of the tiny fellow, never guessed that he was being duped, for the goldfinch was skipping, flirting and swinging for the express purpose of holding his attention that he would not look up and see a small cradle of thistle-down and wool perilously near his head.

A peculiar movement under a small walnut tree caught his eye. He stopped to investigate. It was an unusually large Luna cocoon, and the moth was just bursting the upper end in its struggle to reach light and air. Freckles stood and stared.

"There's something in there trying to get out," he muttered. "Wonder if I could help it? Guess I best not be trying. If I hadn't happened along there wouldn't have been any one to help it, and maybe I'd only be hurting it. It's—oh, skagany! It's just being born!"

Freckles gasped with surprise. The moth cleared the opening and with great wobblings and contortions climbed up the tree. He stared, speechless with amazement as the moth crept around a limb and clung to the underside. There was a great purpy body almost as large as his thumb and of the very snowiest white that Freckles had ever seen. There was a band of delicate lavender across its forehead, and its feet were of the same color. There were antlers like tiny straw colored ferns on its head and on its shoulders little web looking flaps no bigger than his thumb nail. Freckles saw that those queer little web looking things were expanding, drooping, taking on color, and small oval markings were beginning to show.

The minutes went by. Freckles' steady gaze never wavered. Without realizing it he was trembling with eagerness and anxiety. As he saw what was taking place "It's going to have wings!" he breathed in hushed wonder. The morning sun fell on the moth and dried its velvet down, and the soft air made it fluffy. The rapidly growing wings began to appear to be of the most delicate green, with lavender fore ribs, transparent, eye shaped markings edged with lines of red, tan and black and long, crisp trailers.

Freckles was whispering to himself for fear of disturbing the moth. It began a systematic exercise of raising and lowering the exquisite wings to dry them and to establish circulation. Freckles realized that it would soon be able to spread them and sail away. His long coming soul sent up its first sobbing cry.

"I don't know what it is. Oh, I wish I knew! How I wish I knew! It must be something grand. It can't be a butterfly. It's away too big. Oh, I wish there was some one to tell me what it is!"

He climbed on the locust post and, balancing himself by the wire, held a finger in the line of the moth's advance up the twig. It unhesitatingly climbed on, and he stopped back to the path, holding it up to the light and examining it closely. Then he held it in the shade and turned it, gazing over its markings and beautiful coloring. When he held the moth back to the light it climbed on, still waving those magnificent wings.

"But I'd like to be staying with you!" he said. "But if I was to stay here all day you couldn't get any prettier than you are right now and I wouldn't get smart enough to tell what you are. I suppose there's some one that knows. Of course there is. Mr.

McLean said there were people that knew every leaf, bird and flower in the Limberlost. Oh, lord, how I wish you'd be telling me just this one thing!"

The goldfinch had ventured back to the wire, for there was his mate only a few inches above the man creature's head, and, indeed, he simply must not be allowed to look up just then, so the brave little fellow rocked on the wire and piped up, just as he had done every day for a week. "See me; see me!" "See you! Of course I see you." "Growned Freckles. I see you after every day, and what good is it doing me? I might see you every morning for a year and then not be able to tell any one about it. 'See a bird—little and yellow as any canary, with black and white wings. That's as far as I'd get. What you doing? What's your name?' 'See you a mate?' 'What's your name?' 'See you a mate?' 'I reckon I see you, but I might as well be blind for any good it's doing me!'"

Freckles impatiently struck the wire. With a screech of fear the goldfinch fled precipitately. His mate tore from off the nest with a whirr. Freckles looked up and saw it.

"O-ho!" he cried. "So that's what you are doing here! You have a wife. Freckles climbed up to examine the nest, tiny cradle and its contents. The hen darted at him in a frenzy. "Now, where do you come in?" he demanded when he saw that she was not like the goldfinch.

"You are clearing out of here! This is none of your fry. This is the nest of my little yellow friend of the wire, and you shan't be touching it. Don't blame you for wanting to see though. My, but it's a fine nest and beautiful of eggs. Will you be keeping away or will I fire this stick at you?"

Freckles dropped back to the trail. The hen darted to the nest and settled on it with a tender, coddling movement. He of the yellow coat flew to the edge to make sure that everything was right.

"Well, I'll be switched!" muttered Freckles. "If that ain't both their nest! And he's yellow and she's green, or she's yellow and he's green. Of course I don't know, and I haven't any way to find out, but it's plain as the nose on your face that they are both ready to be fighting for that nest, so of course they belong. Don't that beat you? Say, that's what's been sticking me for all of these two weeks on that grass nest in the thorn tree setting, and I think it is hers. The next day a brown bird is on, and the next day a blue bird is on, and the next day a brown bird is on again, and I let her be because I think it must be hers. Next day, he golly, blue's on again, and off I went because it's brown's, and I saw I bet my hat it's both their nest, and I've only been bothering them and making a big fool of myself."

Freckles plodded on down the trail, scowling blackly and viciously spanging the wire. At the fuchs' nest he left the line and peered into the thorn tree. There was no bird brooding. He pressed closer to take a peep at the snowy, spotless little eggs he had found so beautiful, and at the slight noise up fared four tiny baby heads with wide open mouths and hunger cries. Freckles stepped back. The brown bird lit on the edge and closed one cavity with a wiggling green worm, and not two minutes later the blue filled another with something white. That settled it. The blue and brown were mates. Once again Freckles repeated his "How I wish I knew!"

About the bridge spanning Sleepy Snake creek the awale spread wide, the timber largely dropped away, and willows, rushes, marsh grass and splendid wild flowers grew abundantly. Lazy big black water snakes, for which the creek was named, sunned on the bushes, wild ducks and grebe chattered, cranes and herons fished, and muskrats plowed the bank in queer, rolling furrows. It was always a place full of interest to Freckles.

Freckles struck slowly into the path leading from the bridge to the line. It was the one spot at which he might relax his vigilance. The greatest timber thief the swamp had ever known would not have attempted to enter it by the mouth of the creek on account of the water and because there was no protection from surrounding trees. He was swishing the rank grass with his cudgel and thinking of the shade the denser swamp afforded when he suddenly dodged sideways. The cudgel whistled sharply through the air and Freckles sprang back.

Out of the clear sky above him, first level with his face, then skimming, dipping, tilting, whirling until it lit quill down in the path in front of him, came a glossy, iridescent big black feather. As it struck the ground Freckles started it up and with an almost continuous movement faced the sky. There was not a tree of any size in a large open space. From the clear sky it had fallen, and Freckles, gazing eagerly into the arch of June blue with a few lazy clouds floating far up in the sea of ether, had neither mind nor knowledge to dream of a bird hanging as if frozen there. He turned the big quill questioningly, and again his awed eyes swept the sky.

"A feather dropped from heaven!" he breathed reverently. "Are the holy angels molting? But, no; if they were it would be white. Maybe all the angels are not being white. What if the angels of God are white and those of the devil are black? But a black one has no business up there. Maybe some poor black angel is so tired of being punished it's for slipping up to the gates, beating its wings trying to make the Master hear?"

Again and again Freckles searched the sky, but there was no answering gleam of golden gates, no form of sailing bird. Then he went slowly on his way, turning the feather over and wondering about it. It was a wing quill eighteen inches in length, with a big, heavy spine, gray at the base, shading to jet black at the tip, and it caught the play of the sun's rays in slanting gleams of green and bronze. Again Freckles' "old man of the sea" sat sullen and heavy on his shoulders and weighted him down until his step lagged and his heart ached.

"Where did it come from? What is it? Oh, how I wish I knew!" he kept repeating. Before him arched a great green

pool, filled with rotting logs and leaves, bordered with delicate ferns and grasses, among which lifted the creamy spikes of the arrowhead, the blue of water hyacinth and the delicate yellow of the jewel flower. As Freckles leaned, handling the feather and staring first at it and then into the depths of the pool, he once more gave voice to his old query, "I wonder what it is?"

Straight across from him, crouched in the mosses of a soggy old log, a big green bullfrog, with palpitant throat and battling eyes, lifted his head and bellowed in answer, "Fin' dont, fin' dont!"

"What's that?" stammered Freckles, almost too much taken aback to speak. "I—I know you are only a bullfrog; but, be jabers, that sounded mighty like speech. Wouldn't you please to be saying it over?"

The bullfrog cuddled contentedly in the moss. Then suddenly he lifted his voice and, like an imperative drum, bent, rolled it again. "Fin' dont, fin' dont!"

Freckles had the answer. Like the lightning's flash, something seemed to snap in his brain. There was a warbling flame before his eyes. Then his mind cleared. His head lifted in a new pose, his shoulders squared, and his spine straightened. The agony was over. His soul floated free. Freckles came into his birthright.

"Before God, I will!" He uttered the oath so impressively that the recording angel never winced as he posted it up in the prayer column. Freckles set his hat over the top of one of the locust posts used between trees to hold up the wire and fastened the feather securely in the band. Then he started down the line, talking to himself as men that have worked long alone always fall into the habit of doing.

"What a fool I have been!" he muttered. "Of course that's what I have to do. There wouldn't likely anybody be doing it for me. Of course I can! What am I a man for? If I was a four footed thing of the swamp maybe I couldn't, but a man can do anything if he's the grit to work hard enough and stick at it. Mr. McLean is always saying, and here's the way I am to do it. He said, too, that there were people that knew everything in the swamp. Of course they have written books. The thing for me to be doing is to quit moping and be buying me some books. Never bought a book in my life or anything else of much account, for that matter. Oh, ain't I glad I didn't waste me money! I'll surely be having enough to get a few. Let me see."

CHAPTER IV.

FRECKLES' WORLD OF PROMISE.

FRECKLES had walked the timber line ten months. His pay was \$20 a month, and his board cost \$5. That left \$22 a month, and the \$2 was more than his clothing had cost him. At the very least he had \$200 in the bank.

"I'll be having a book about all the birds, trees, flowers, butterflies—and



THE SUN GLINTED ON ITS SHARP, HOOKED BEAK.

yes, by gummy, I'll be having one about the frogs—if it takes every cent I have," he promised himself. Freckles fell into a rapid pace, for he had lost time that morning, and as he rounded the last curve he was almost running.

Then, wavering, flickering, darting here and there over the sweet marsh grass, came a great black shadow. He had seen some owls and hawks of the swamp that he thought could be classed as large birds, but never anything like this, for six feet it spread its great shining wings. Its big, strong feet could be seen drawn up among its feathers. The sun glinted on its sharp, hooked beak. It lit on a low tree, and a second later Freckles saw another shadow sweep the grass.

They were evidently mates, for with a queer rolling hop the first came shivering his bronze wings, dived up to the new arrival and gave her a silly little peck on her wing. Then he coquettishly drew away and ogled her. He lifted his head and waddled from her a few steps, awkwardly ambled back and gave her a sort of kiss on her beak.

The lover sidestepped a few feet. He spread his wings and slowly and softly waded them precisely, as if he were fanning his charmer, which indeed was the result he accomplished. Then he bobbed up to his bombardment once more. He faced her squarely this time and turned his head from side to side with queer little jerks and indiscriminate peckings at her wings and head. She yawned and ambled away indifferently. Freckles reached up, pulled the quill from his hat and, looking from it to the birds, nodded in settled conviction.

With a ravishing swagger, half lifted wings and deep, guttural hissing the lover came on again. He suddenly lifted his body, but the other bird coolly rocked forward on the limb, glided gracefully beneath him and slowly sailed off into the Limberlost.

Freckles hurried down the trail, and when he neared the path to the clearing and saw the boss sitting motionless on the mare that was the pride of his heart the boy broke into a run.

"Oh, Mr. McLean!" he cried, "I hope I haven't kept you waiting very long! And the sun is getting so hot! I have been so slow this morning! I could have gone faster, only there were so many things to keep me, and I didn't know you would be here. I'll hurry after this. I've never had to be giving excuses before. The line wasn't down, and there wasn't a sign of trouble. It was other things that were making me late."

This flushed, panting, talkative lad was not the same creature that had sought him in despair and bitterness. With an eloquence of which he never dreamed Freckles told his story. He talked with such enthusiasm that McLean never took his eyes from his face nor shifted in the saddle until he described the strange bird lover, and then the boss suddenly bent over the pommel and laughed with him.

"They're back there in the middle of the swamp now," said Freckles. "Do you suppose there is any chance of them staying with me chickens? If they do they'll be about the queerest I have. But I tell you, sir, I am getting some plum good ones. There's a new kind over at the mouth of the creek that uses its wings like feet and walks on all fours. It travels like a thrashing machine. There's another, tall as me waist, with a bill a foot long, a neck near two, not the thickness of my wrist and an elegant color. He's some blue and gray, touched up with black, white and brown. The voice of him is such that if he'd be going up and standing by a tree and saving at it a few times he could be cutting it square off. I don't know but it would be a good idea to try him on the gang, sir."

McLean laughed. "Those must be blue herons, Freckles," he said. "And it doesn't seem possible, but your story of the big black birds sounds like genuine black cultures. They are common enough in the south. I've seen them thick about the lumber camps of Georgia, but I never heard of any this far north before. They must be strays. You have perfectly described our nearest equivalent to a branch of these birds called in Europe Pharaoh's chickens."

"He was loving her so," said Freckles in a hushed voice. Freckles lifted his brave, steady eyes to the boss.

"If anybody loved me like that, Mr. McLean, I wouldn't be spending any time caring how they looked or moved. All I'd be thinking of was how they felt toward me. If they will stay I'll be caring as much for them as any chickens I have."

The boss of McLean was a study. "And now, Freckles, what has been the trouble all spring? You have done your work as faithfully as any one could ask, but I can't help seeing that there is something wrong. Are you tired of your job?"

"I love it," answered Freckles. "It will almost break my heart when the gang begins tearing up the swamp and scaring away me chickens." "Then what is the matter?" insisted McLean.

"I think, sir, it's been books. Being among these beautiful things every day, I got so anxious like to be knowing and naming them that it got to eating into me and went and made me near sick when I was well as I could be. Of course I learned to read, and write and figure some at school, but there was nothing there nor in any of the city that I ever got to see that would make a fellow even be dreaming of such interesting things as there are here. I've seen the parks, but they ain't even beginning to be in it with Limberlost. It's all new and strange to me. I don't know a thing about any of it. The bullfrog told me to 'find out,' plain as day, and books are the only way, ain't they?"

"Of course," said McLean, astonished at himself for his heartfelt relief. He had not guessed until that minute what it would have meant to him to have Freckles give up. "You know enough to study out what you want yourself if you have the books, don't you?"

"I am pretty sure I do," said Freckles. "I learned all I'd the chance at in the home, and me schooling was good as far as it went. Wouldn't let you go past fourteen, you know. I always did me sums perfect, and I loved me history books. I never could get me grammar to suit them. They was too hard. I used to get so wrong talking, but I could know them all out singing. I was always leader in the home, and once one of the superintendents gave me car fare and let me go into the city and sing in a boys' choir. The master said I'd the sweetest voice of them all until it got rough-like, and then he made me quit for awhile, but he said it would be coming back by now, and I'm really thinking it is, sir, for I've tried about the line a bit of late."

"That and me chickens have been all the company I've been having, and it will be all I'll want if I can have books and learn the real names of things, where they come from and why they do such interesting things. It's been fretting me to be shut up here among all these wonders and not knowing a thing. I wanted to ask you what some books would cost me and if you'd be having the goodness to get me the right ones. I think I have enough money."

Freckles handed up his account book, and the boss studied it gravely. "You needn't touch your bank account, Freckles," he said. "Ten dollars from this month's pay will get you everything you need to start on. I will write a friend in Grand Rapids today to select you the very best and send them at once."

Freckles' eyes were shining. "Never owned a book in my life," he said. "Even me schoolbooks were never mine. Lord, how I used to wish I could have just one of them for me very own! Won't it be fun to see me sawbird and me little yellow fellow looking at me from the pages of a book and their real names and all about them printed alongside?"

"I'll have Duncan get you a ten bushel store box the next time he goes to town," said McLean. "You can put in your spare time filling it with the specimens you pick up until the books come, and then you can study out what you have. I suspect you



"YOU NEEDN'T TOUCH YOUR BANK ACCOUNT."

could find a lot of stuff that I could sell for you. I'll order you a butterfly net and box and show you how scientists pin specimens. But I don't want to hear of your killing any birds. They are protected by heavy fines."

McLean rode away and left Freckles staring after him. Then he saw the point and grinned sheepishly. Standing on the trail, he twirled the feather and thought the morning over.

"Well, if life ain't getting to be worth living!" he said wonderingly. "Biggest streak of luck I ever had! 'Bout time something was coming my way, but I wouldn't ever thought anybody could strike such prospects through just a falling feather!"

On Duncan's return from his next trip to town there was a store box loaded on the back of his wagon. He drove to the west entrance of the swamp, set the box on a stump that Freckles had selected in a beautiful and sheltered place and made it secure on its foundation with a tree at its back.

"It seems most a pity to nail into that tree," said Duncan. "I hadn't the time to examine into the grain of it, but it looks as if it might be a rare one. Anyhow, the nail'll winna hurt it deep, and havin' the case by it will make it safer if it is a guld one."

"Isn't it an oak?" asked Freckles. "Aye," said Duncan. "It looks like it might be one of them fine grained guld ones that mak' such grand furniture."

When the body of the case was secure Duncan made a door out of the lid and fastened it on with hinges. He drove a staple, screwed on a latch and gave Freckles a small padlock, so that he might safely fasten in his treasures. He made a shelf in the top for the books and last of all covered the case with oiled cloth.

It was the first time in Freckles' life that any one had ever done that much for his pleasure, and it warmed his heart with pure joy.

"Mr. Duncan," he said, "I don't know why you are being so mighty good to me, but if you have any jobs up at the cabin that I could do for you or Mrs. Duncan hours off the line it would make me mighty happy."

"Freckles," said Duncan as he began gathering up his tools, "I canna see that it will hurt ye to be told that ye are doing every day a thing that pleases the boss as much as anything ye could do. Ye've been' uncommon faithful, lad, and honest as old Father Time. McLean is trustin' ye as he would his own flesh and blood."

"Oh, Duncan!" cried the boy. "Are you sure?"

"Why, I know," answered Duncan. "I wadna venture to say ye, in those first days he cautioned me na to tell ye that, but now he wadna care. D'ye ken, Freckles, that some of the single trees ye are guardin' are worth a thousand dollars?"

Freckles looked limp, and his eyes popped. "Ye see," said Duncan, "that's why they maun be watched so closely. The other night down at camp some son of a bannan was suggestin' that ye might be sellin' the boss out to Jack and lettin' him tak the trees secretly and nobody wad ever ken till the gang gets here."

A wave of scarlet flooded Freckles' face, and he blazed hotly at the insult. "And the boss," continued Duncan, "ignoring Freckles' anger, 'he lays back just as cool as coveymen and says, 'I'll give a thousand dollars to any man that will show me a fresh stump when we reach the Limberlost,' says he. Some of the men just snapped him up that they'd trust him. So ye see how the boss is trustin' ye, lad."

"I am gladder than I can ever express," said Freckles. "And now will I be walking double time to keep some of them from cutting a tree to get all that money?"

"Mither o' Moses!" howled Duncan. "Ye can trust the Scotch to dangle 'things a'tegither. McLean was only meanin' to show ye all confidence and honor. He's gone and set a high price for some dirty whelp to ruin ye. I was just tryin' to show ye how he felt toward ye, and I've gone and give ye that worry to bear."

"I am mighty proud of what you have been telling me, Duncan," said Freckles. "I need the warning sure, for with the books coming I might be tempted to neglect me work when double watching is needed."

Freckles picked up his club and started down the line, whistling cheerily. Duncan went straight to the lower camp and, calling McLean aside, repeated the conversation verbatim. "And, nae matter what happens now or ever, dinna ye dare let anything make ye believe that Freckles haans guarded faithful as any man could."

"I don't think anything could shake my faith in the lad," said McLean. Freckles kept one eye religiously on the line. The other he divided between the path, his friends of the wire and a search of the sky for his latest arrivals. Every day since they coming he had seen them, either hang-

ing like small black clouds above the swamp or bobbing over logs and trees with their queer tilting walk. Whenever he could spare time he entered the swamp and tried to make friends with them, and they were the tamest of all his unnumbered subjects. They ducked, dodged and ambled about him, over logs and bushes, and not even a near approach would drive them to flight.

For two weeks he had found them circling over the Limberlost regularly, but one morning the female was missing, and only the big black chicken hung sentinel above the swamp. His mate did not reappear in the following days, and Freckles grew very anxious. He spoke of it to Mrs. Duncan, and she quitted his fears by raising a delightful hope in their stead.

"Why, Freckles, if it's the hen bird ye are missin' it's ten to one she's safe," she said. "She's laid and is setting, ye silly. Watch him and mark whaur he lights. Then follow and find the nest. Some Sabbath we'll all gang see it."

Accepting this theory, Freckles began searching for the nest, but as he had no idea where to look and Duncan could offer no helpful suggestion the nest was no nearer being found.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED another hundred of those dollar Bon Bon dishes, and commencing this morning, we will give with a purchase of a one-pound box of Lige's Chocolates a Bon Bon dish, only one to a customer, while they last, for New Year gifts. We have a nice line of fancy boxes filled with the best candy made. We also place on sale 500 boxes of the candy for 25c this morning. We have many useful New Year gifts at Medical Hall, 24 Church street, where you save from 10 to 50 per cent. on drugs and prescriptions. J. W. O'Sullivan.

STATE REFORMS NEEDED. (From the St. Johnsbury Caledonian.)

Although candidates for State offices are in the field and advocating political panaceas for various ills it is encouraging to note the serious discussion that is going on in the State press of social rather than political reforms. It indicates a deep conviction among men concerned with public matters that Vermont can make real progress in the care and restraint of its criminal and unfortunate classes. The frank discussion that is being made of these matters cannot fail to awaken a healthy public sentiment that eventually will force action.

There are three matters that deserve careful thought and intelligent legislative action at this time. The care of the drunkard, the care of morally and mentally deficient adults and children and a more prompt and efficient method of detecting and punishing crime. To treat all these subjects in one article would make a long few columns of text. So we will give attention to only the first at this time.

Vermont's law making the drunkard a criminal and attempting to punish him as such has proven a failure because the offense of intoxication is not serious enough to merit sufficient punishment to effect any moral reform in the criminal. Perhaps it would be difficult to find a better method for the punishment of most first offenders than the present public trial and imposition of a small fine because these first offenses should be treated early enough so the offender could reform of his own free will and the disgrace of a public conviction should spur him to make such a reform. But for the man who has become so confirmed in the habit of using intoxicating liquor to excess that legal punishment is no deterrent, the fine and short terms of imprisonment are generally harmful. In the first place the impracticable is so short that the criminal gains the moral strength necessary to reform himself and it also brands him as a criminal and handicaps him in an effort to secure a respectable living after he is released. Thirdly, it often leaves his family without means of support and adds pauperism.

The State should cease its attempt to make the convicted drunkard pay the cost of his trial and punishment and then make the penalty of his offense amply enough to care for these expenses. It should make the confinement of the victim long enough to be of real assistance in breaking him of the habit. It should allow him a fair compensation above the expense of his board and restraint. In the case of a married man this compensation should go for the support of his family and be expended by the overseer of the poor if the family is not competent to use it judiciously. In the case of an unmarried man it should be deposited in a bank subject to his call when he has been released. Confinement under these conditions would work little hardship on the man himself and would certainly be more beneficial to his family than to have him at liberty and spending his money for liquor and subjecting them to the abuse of an intoxicated brute. The amelioration of the conditions of his confinement would justify the longer term. It might transform the confirmed drunkard from a worthless and irresponsible person into a self-supporting and self-respecting man. It certainly should be continued until it had accomplished these ends.

This work could probably be best done by a State reformatory rather than a State penal institution. But as Vermont has only penal institutions it might first be undertaken in them as an effort to reform. If it proved successful it would be a short time before another institution would be necessary. Release from probation for a term long enough to establish a man's mastery over his appetite and violation of his parole subject him to another reformatory period of confinement. In using the word confinement we do not mean absolute confinement. This class of prisoners might be tried with the honor system might be tried with most beneficial results and it might even be carried so far as to allow them to be housed in buildings separate from the penal institution. If our statements arouse serious thought on this matter it will be an aid to what we believe a worthy cause.

A PARALLEL CASE. "Here's an account of a fellow who took two years to make a toothpick." "Some overdrawn, eh?" "Oh, I don't know. I know of a mother who took five years to make a match."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

A SUMMER COMMUTER. "Why do you always hold your arms akimbo?" "It's the bundle habit. I'll outgrow it after living in town for a few weeks."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

TALKING IT OVER. "Why did you shoot at me?" "Look you, I shot at a bird." "Didn't you see my bright red coat?" "Does a deer wear a bright red coat?" "No, I thought it seemed rather odd as I shot."—Washington Herald.

TUBERCLE BACILLI IN BUTTER

State Laboratory Reports on Test
Samples Bought in Burlington.

Guinea Pigs inoculated with Small Amount of the Product and Autopsies in Three Cases Revealed Germs.

A startling report, the first in a series of tests of all the butter manufactured and sold in the State of Vermont for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not the butter is carrying the germs of tuberculosis, has just been completed at the State Laboratory of Hygiene.

The report shows that out of a test of ten samples of butter being sold in Burlington, three contained positive evidence of tubercle bacilli, while two showed no evidence of the disease.

These samples of butter were procured by the State laboratory and on November 22 a number of guinea pigs were inoculated with two cubic centimeters each of the butter. On January 3 autopsies were performed on the guinea pigs and following is the official report of the State laboratory, showing where the butter came from and the result of the tests. The official report is headed "Report of examination of butter for tubercle bacilli by inoculation in guinea pigs."

Co-operative creamery, Essex Center, numerous adhesions of liver, omentum and diaphragm. Tubercle bacilli found in pus from

Dairy, Butter, Brown & Noy, Underhill; inguinal gland broken down. Numerous subcutaneous nodules. Tubercle bacilli found in pus from gland.

Co-operative creamery, Riverside; peritoneal and retroperitoneal glands enlarged. Mesenteric glands enlarged. Spleen nodular. Nodules on diaphragm and liver.

Jericho Co-operative creamery. No evidence of disease.

Dairy, F. Carpenter, Burlington; few enlarged peritoneal glands.

Mad River Dairy, Essex Junction; few very small intraperitoneal glands.